

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 036599

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ORIGIN NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 IO-11 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 NSCE-00

SSO-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 /062 R

DRAFTED BY NEA/ARN:PKBULLEN:GCB

APPROVED BY NEA:ALATHERTON

NEA/ARN:MDRAPER

NEA/IAI:WBSMITH (DRAFT)

IO/UNP:POAKLEY

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO USMISSION USUN NEW YORK IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 036599

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, XF

SUBJECT: ARAB LEAGUE DEMARCHE ON "ZION SQUARE"

REF: USUN 558

1. AMBASSADORS OF LEBANON, SAUDI ARABIA, EGYPT, AND MOROCCO MADE JOINT DEMARCHE FEB 13 TO ASSISTANT SECRETARY ATHERTON, ON BEHALF OF ALL ARAB AMBASSADORS, TO PROTEST MOVE TO REDESIGNATE PART OF UN PLAZA AS "ZION SQUARE" AND TO SOLICIT INTERCESSION TO PREVENT THIS. WHILE NOT DIS-PUTING NEW YORK CITY'S RIGHT TO NAME STREETS ANYTHING IT CHOOSES, AMBASSADORS LABELED PROPOSED ACTION A DELIBERATE ATTEMPT TO PROVOKE ARAB STATES AND ALL UN MEMBERS IN WAKE OF UNGA RESOLUTION ON ZIONISM AND RACISM. THEY POINTED OUT THAT, IN ADDITION TO ARABS, NONALIGNED COUNTRIES ARE CONCERNED. THEY SUGGESTED IT WOULD BE FAR BETTER FOR AREA TO BE NAMED FOR RALPH BUNCHE, IN ACCORD WITH PROPOSAL FOR
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PAGE 02 STATE 036599

BUNCHE MEMORIAL APPROVED EARLIER, WITH SOME LOCATION AWAY

FROM UN BEING GIVEN ZION NAME. THAT WOULD GET ACROSS MESSAGE OF THOSE BEHIND PROPOSED NAME CHANGE WITHOUT PROVOKING CONFRONTATION. AMBASSADORS PROTESTED THAT LOCATION PROPOSED -- UN PLAZA BETWEEN 42ND AND 43RD STREETS -- ENCOMPASSED MAIN ENTRANCES TO UN TOWER AND GENERAL ASSEMBLY, AND THAT OTHER PROPOSAL -- BETWEEN 45TH AND 46TH STREETS -- WAS LOCATION OF SEVERAL ARAB CONSULATES.

2. ATHERTON REPLIED THAT WE UNDERSTAND FEELINGS, ESPECIALLY AMONG ARAB DELEGATIONS. WE HAVE POINTED OUT POLITICAL IMPLICATIONS TO CITY AUTHORITIES AND WILL CONTINUE TO USE ALL AVAILABLE AVENUES TO GET POINT ACROSS. UNDER OUR CONSTITUTION, HOWEVER, FEDERAL GOVERNMENT CANNOT DIRECT NEW YORK CITY TO DO OR NOT TO DO SOMETHING. WE HAVE BEEN SUCCESSFUL IN GETTING THE AREA INVOLVED REDUCED, AND WE WILL CONTINUE OUR EFFORTS. ATHERTON URGED THAT ARAB DELS NOT MAKE MATTER A PUBLIC ISSUE AT PRESENT BECAUSE THAT WOULD REDUCE OR ELIMINATE CHANCES FOR OUR EFFORTS TO SUCCEED.

3. AMBASSADORS RESPONDED THAT ARABS COULD NOT KEEP SILENT TOO LONG, LEST THEY BE CRITICIZED FOR FAILING TO PROTEST AND FOR NOT TAKING ALL AVENUES TO OPPOSE THE MOVE. ATHERTON RESPONDED THAT AMBASSADORS' CALL HERE, AND AMBASSADOR HILMY'S REPRESENTATIONS TO USUN, ARE THEMSELVES EFFORTS WHICH MAKE IT CLEAR THAT ARAB REPS DID NOT FAIL TO REACT. KISSINGER

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